

CLAIMS

What is claim is:

- 10 1) A method for providing a promotion, comprising the steps of:
- (a) obtaining a product having an alphanumeric sequence;
 - (b) entering the alphanumeric sequence supplied with the product into a web page;
 - (c) validating the alphanumeric sequence;
 - (d) awarding a promotional value associated with the alphanumeric sequence;
 - 15 (e) choosing an item for purchase;
 - (j) redeeming the item based on the promotional value;
 - and,
 - (k) purchasing the item.
- 20 2) The method of claim 1, wherein the promotional value is an electronic coupon.
- 3) The method of claim 1, wherein the alphanumeric sequence is positioned inside packaging of the product.

5 4) The method of claim 1, wherein the alphanumeric sequence
is positioned on the package of the product.

 5) The method of claim 1, wherein an address of a web site is
associated with the alphanumeric sequence and the method further
10 comprise the step of accessing a web page associated the web site.

 6) The method of claim 1, wherein the item is a service.

 7) The method of claim 2, wherein the validating step includes
15 decoding the alphanumeric code to determine an associated
electronic coupon.

 8) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of
collecting information from a buyer of the item.

20 9) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of using
the information for marketing purposes.

5 10) The method of claim 1, wherein the choosing step includes
accessing an online retailer web site.

11) The method of claim 1, wherein the choosing step includes
accessing an electronic warehouse.

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12) A method for providing a promotion, comprising the steps of:

(a) applying an alphanumeric sequence to a product by a
first retailer;

(b) selling the product by the first retailer to a user;

15 (c) accessing a web site on a first retailer processing
device, by a user processing device;

(d) entering the alphanumeric sequence supplied with the
product, by the user, into a web page of the web site;

(e) validating the alphanumeric sequence;

20 (f) awarding a promotional value;

(g) accessing a web site on a second retailer processing
device, by the user processing device;

(h) choosing, by the user, an item for purchase ;

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- (i) redeeming the item for purchase based on the promotional value; and,
 - (j) purchasing the item by the user.

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13) The method of claim 12, wherein the promotional value is an electronic coupon.

14) The method of claim 12, wherein the item is a service.

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15) The method of claim 13, wherein the electronic coupon can be accumulated in an account.

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16) The method of claim 13, wherein the electronic coupon is increased responsive to the product purchased during a predetermined period of time.

17) The method of claim 13, wherein the electronic coupon is increased responsive to the product purchased in a predetermined geographic area.

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18) The method of claim 13, wherein the electronic coupon is increased responsive to the user answering a question.

19) The method of claim 13, wherein the electronic coupon is increased responsive to a predetermined date.

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20) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon step includes awarding a prize.

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21) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon step includes activating internet money.

22) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon step includes providing the second retailer that will redeem the coupon.

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23) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon step includes providing an opportunity to enter a sweepstake contest.

5 24) The method of claim 13, wherein the awarding the coupon
step includes providing the user with a visual game piece
associated with the alphanumeric sequence, and wherein a
user wins a prize in response obtaining a plurality of
predetermined visual game pieces.

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25) An article of manufacture including a computer readable
medium, comprising;

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- (a) a first software component for providing a value
responsive to receiving an alphanumeric sequence
from a first product;
- (b) a second software component for directing a user to a
web site for purchasing a second product; and,
- (c) a third software component for purchasing the second
product using the value.

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26) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

(d) a fourth software component for increasing the value
responsive to a predetermined period of time.

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5 27) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

 (d) a fourth software component for increasing the value
 responsive to the second product being purchased in
 a predetermined geographic area.

10 28) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

 (d) a fourth software component for increasing the value
 responsive to a user answering a question.

 29) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

15 (d) a fourth software component for increasing the value
 responsive to a predetermined date.

 30) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

 (d) a fourth software component for awarding a prize.

20 31) The article of manufacture of claim 25, further comprising:

 (d) a fourth software component for providing an
 opportunity to enter a sweepstake contest.

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32) The article of manufacture of claim 25 further comprising:

- (d) a fourth software component for providing the user with a game piece associated with the alphanumeric sequence, and wherein a user wins a prize in response obtaining a plurality of predetermined game pieces.

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33) The article of manufacture of claim 25, wherein the computer readable medium is positioned in a processing device coupled to the Internet and a client processing device access the processing device.

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